

## MOSHE STERNSSCHUSS

Like Ben-Zvi and Priver, Sternschuss has passed through the melting-pot of Bezalel, where he engaged for three years in the study of painting, drawing and sculpture. However, the four years that he spent in Paris have had a decisive influence on his artistic course. It was there that he decided to devote himself exclusively to sculpture. Until less than a decade ago, Sternschuss was what is customarily described as a realistic sculptor. His portraits were delicate and intimate. His nudes had a rural freshness, sometimes rather heavy which, however, was rendered more delicate thanks to the refined expression of the face. In his work it was possible to detect influences as diversified as those of Lehmbruck, Rodin and Despiau. The elongated deformation of the former, the volcanic sensuousness of the second in carving the bodies and the psychologism of the third in the features. All these contended together in the work of Sternschuss and rendered it difficult to identify his personal characteristics. In due course, however, a crisis set in his work. He began to "edge" the

rounded forms of his work. The hips, the thighs, the shoulders, the head, began to lose their natural roundness and became "cubical"; yet this was only a stage on Sternschuss' road to abstraction.

The three works shown here demonstrate how Sternschuss is continuing his abstract sculpture. His "Reclining figure" (Plate 102) shows the influence of Henry Moore; but the personal approach of Sternschuss is stronger than the influence, so that the piece constitutes a synthesis between his earlier "geometric realism" and his attempt to concretise, after his own fashion, the "idea". In his "Biblical figure" (Plate 103) there is a pleasant movement. "The Wounded Bird" (Plate 104) undoubtedly has a lyricism in its forms which many will be able to appreciate. The artist's "idea" of this theme is simple and acceptable. The forms are simple and beautiful and the differing lift of the two wings is the key to the interpretation of the whole.

In the modest sculpture of Israel, Sternschuss has a place of his own as a representative of the abstract.